

MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
October 25, 2002

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Neil Bernstein, Chair
Robin Fortney
Kathy Gourley
Scott Moats
Timothy Sproul
Laura Jackson
Jeff Vonk

STAFF PRESENT

Daryl Howell
John Pearson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Neil Bernstein called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

Add the approval of the July minutes.

<i>Motion was made by Robin Fortney to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Laura Jackson. Motion carried unanimously.</i>

APPROVE MINUTES

Chairperson Bernstein called for the approval of the April Minutes.

<i>Minutes approved.</i>

Chairperson Bernstein called for the approval of the July minutes.

<i>Minutes approved.</i>

ROCK ISLAND PRESERVE

John Pearson gave a presentation about the history of the Rock Island Preserve and the proposed addition. He said there has been a lot of human use of the landscape in the past but there has also been a lot of reinvasion of the formerly disturbed areas by native species. In 1936 the Rock Island Preserve consisted of a sand quarry on the western edge and what appeared to be some type of agricultural activity. In 1957 many of the trees are gone and there was a homestead in the center of a small grove. The picture from 1962 shows some east-west and north-south lines through what is now the sand prairie, which may indicate past cultivation. In 1991, the residence is no longer present and the preserve is very much like it is today. He said despite the rather heavy use of the

preserve over the years it is interesting to note that there is a diversity of native plant and animal species. In a recent study conducted by Tom Cady, a botanist from Iowa City found 300 native plant species, some of which are on the State list of special concern species. Terry VanDeWalle from Earthtech Corporation conducted a survey of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians finding 11 mammals, 7 reptiles including the threatened blundings turtle, and 5 amphibians. Frank Olsen performed a study of butterflies in the preserve and found 46 species including the state threatened byssus skipper.

He then showed the history of the 3 acre parcel that contains the swan pond which showed agriculture use in 1936 and the first photo showing the pond is from 1978. The photos of the parcel that is known as the Byssus Skipper Prairie shows a steady encroachment of trees with the original opening being at least twice the size it is now and evidence of past agricultural use. Photos of the wooded area show evidence of agricultural use, a farmstead, several outbuildings, and a road system within the area. The Byssus Skipper prairie and the island in the proposed addition were the least disturbed areas with no evidence of roads or buildings.

He said there are two factors that help to explain how there can be a richness of native plants and animals in an area that has been heavily disturbed in the past. In 1936 the landscape surrounding the current preserve was pasture, which likely had native plant and animal species. When the sand pit and the agricultural field were abandoned there were apparently enough natural habitats in the area that the native plant and animal species could reinvade the area. The other factor is the sandy soil which is not very hospitable to exotic weeds that require moist conditions.

Neil Bernstein commended John Pearson on his GIS presentation on the behalf of the Preserves Board. The board indicated that this type of study would be beneficial when considering future proposals.

Jeff Vonk asked when the reports for all of the surveys currently being conducted would be available.

John Pearson said in the original preserve, the Preserves Board has contracted for a plant survey by Tom Cady and a study of small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds by Terry VanDeWalle. Frank Olsen is doing a survey of butterflies both in the original preserve and a portion of the proposed property. The deadline for these studies is June 30, 2003. In the Department of Transportation (DOT) study corridor the DOT contracted with Terry VanDeWalle for an animal study for which the final report is now being compiled. He said the DOT botanist is creating a master species list for the area but John said he was unsure when it would be available. The DOT has also hired Dennis Schlicht to conduct a butterfly survey. The results from all of the DOT studies should be turned into the DOT within a few months. He said there will not be a detailed

plant or animal study done of any of the proposed addition north of the DOT study corridor but that he had done some limited sampling in late September.

Jeff Vonk asked if there would be any benefit in having John Pearson do additional studies in the spring.

John Pearson said a thorough survey would require visits several times throughout the year.

Jeff Vonk asked John Pearson to plot the information from the surveys once it is available on a computer program similar to the one he used to present the history of the preserve.

Neil Bernstein said without intervention the byssus skipper area would be taken over by trees in the next five or ten years. He said this area is also likely one of the last large patch of big bluestem in the area. The GIS surveys validated that the preserve contained some of the last natural vegetation of the area that was once more widespread.

Jeff Vonk said that Linn County would continue to manage the property regardless of the Preserves Board's decision.

Dick Heft, President of the Linn County Conservation Board, said the proposed expansion to the preserve has a variety of habitat including bottomland floodplain, prairie, and woodlands, that they feel would fit well into the preserve system. He asked for the board's serious consideration in adding the addition to the preserves system.

Dan Beichler, Director of the Linn County Conservation Board said there are very few places in Iowa that have not been impacted by human use and despite its history there are some unique habitats on the property including potential habitat for the ornate box turtle, which has been identified both on the existing preserve and the expanded portion. He said that their proposal goes into more depth on why they feel so strongly that this property should be included as a State Preserve.

Neil Bernstein said he had received the proposal on Tuesday so he did not think that the other board members had time to look at it either.

Chairperson Neil Bernstein said Linn County Conservation Board submitted a proposed management plan to the Preserves board at the last meeting and they had promised to give the County their feedback on it at this one. He said the Preserves Board would like some clarification on the following items.

- In the management plan the Conservation Board refers to a certain area as a bog. The term bog means a peat land type habitat, which the Preserves Board does not feel accurately describes the area.
- Item three on page three has some language that is confusing and alludes to the fact that other properties outside of the property being managed are of preserve quality as well.

Dan Beichler said there are other properties along the Cedar River Greenbelt that the Conservation Board has classified as natural areas because they are not as unique and are generally open to hunting.

Neil Bernstein said other items needing clarification are:

- Item 106 on page five of the management plan uses documentation from the 1980's with regard to the status of some plants in the area. The Department has updated the status with existing surveys.
- On page six of the management plan lists the proposed road as an incompatible usage. Adverse impacts should refer to what happens on the preserve itself, therefore the road should not be included in the management plan.

Dan Beichler said the Conservation Board was trying to address this management plan in a more broad sense to include county preserves, not just the state preserve portion.

Neil Bernstein said that the problem with that statement being in a management plan for a State Preserve is that it politicizes the Preserves Board.

- Item 403 on page six of the management plan talks about management of the preserve using brush clearing and controlled burning, he asked the Conservation Board to include a little more detail about the frequency and size of areas to be cleared at a time, and the use of herbicides.

Dan Beichler said the Conservation Board is interested in working with the Preserves Board to develop a management plan that is more of a dynamic plan so that it can be used on an ongoing basis and adjusted it as needed.

Jeff Vonk asked if it would be incompatible from their proposal for the preserves board to look adding only portions of the proposed addition to the State Preserves System.

Dan Beichler, Director of the County Conservation Board said he would like the Preserves Board to look at the bigger picture in terms of diversity.

Jeff Vonk said that condition may make the entire proposal not qualify.

Tim Sproul asked if it was Linn County's position that the Preserves Board is to consider accepting the entire 100 acres into the preserves system.

Dan Beichler said that it was.

Neil Bernstein said before the Preserves Board could vote on preserves status they would need a complete management plan that everyone agreed upon and reports from the completed studies. He reviewed the letters the Preserves Board had received about this issue. The first letter, from Dave Lyon, a professor from Cornell College urged the board to accept the 100 acre parcel as preserve and cautioned against the board being influenced by political pressure. The second letter, from David Elderkin pointed out that it is the charge of the Preserves Board to evaluate the land as to its preserve quality and not to allow any outside influence to sway their decision. A third letter was received from Cliff Sheets who expressed the same message as Dr. Lyon. He asked the board to discuss how they view the Preserve Board's position in this matter.

Robin Fortney said she felt it is important that the preserve board look at the intent of the preserve system, however the members of the board also have to be aware of surrounding issues.

Jeff Vonk said he believes that the members of the Preserves Board are concentrating on the merits of the property, but they are aware of the other issues going on in the area.

Neil Bernstein said the reason they have asked for the surveys is so they can make the best possible decision about the property and while they are aware of the extraneous issues, their primary duty is to look at the land for its preserve quality as defined by the preserves act.

Laura Jackson said that the preserves board is looking at ways to improve management and protection of the current preserves. As everyone knows animals will move around and across the boundaries of the preserves. She said under different circumstances if the board members were aware of a property that would enhance the butterfly population by adding a nearby population to it, she felt the board would look at it as an opportunity to improve the current preserve.

Jeff Vonk said that decision would be based on ecological and biological data not just because it is available. It comes back to unique, rare, and ecological reasons for making the decision to add a parcel to the preserves system.

Suki Cell, Vice President of Public Affairs for the Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce said this issue is politicized and the Preserves Board has already taken a position against the Highway 100 project, however the Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce believes that there is an opportunity for the

coexistence between the road and the Rock Island Preserve. She said this type of situation is not unique in Iowa. The designers of the road have made accommodations; they have changed the route and have taken into consideration the information given to them. This is an important last link of a State road system in Cedar Rapids. She said there is a great deal of growth in the western portion of Linn County and Benton County is the fastest growing county in the state. All of this has to do with the activity in the corridor called the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City area corridor. The Highway 100 project is extremely important to them at the Chamber of Commerce, to their business members who overwhelmingly support it, and to the citizens of the county. She asked the board to look at the possibility of coexistence while they are considering these parcels of land.

Cliff Sheets a resident of Cedar Rapids said he has no personal or economic interest, directly or indirectly, with the development of the corridor or the proposed Highway 100 project. He said his motivation for speaking is a desire to see a scarce natural area preserved and enhanced by the addition of the proposed 100 acres to the Rock Island Preserve. Iowa and Linn County's landscape has changed dramatically over the last 150 years. The cities have grown and roads have been built. There still are a few natural areas in the state and in fact some have been restored. The quality of life in this community is enhanced by the proximity to these natural areas. There is now a rare opportunity to add scarce natural land to the State Preserves System. He urged the board to recommend inclusion of the proposed addition. He cautioned the board to not get sidetracked by pressures from Highway 100 proponents and not to worry about how the Board's actions may affect their plans. He said the political and developmental interests pushing for this highway do not view land preservation as a priority.

Carl Swanson, resident of Cedar Rapids, said he would like to take this opportunity to encourage the board approve this addition to the Rock Island Preserve. He said they have a rare opportunity to preserve the area for the education and enjoyment of generations to come. The existing preserve is an excellent model for how an area, even with past human intervention can become havens for rare species of plants and wildlife. He said he was encouraged by the board's desire to have the studies completed before making any final decisions. The studies will show that this is an area that has a vast resource of plant and wildlife. He said according to the 2000 census the growth in the Cedar Rapids area is mainly in the northern portion of the city, the Cedar Rapids City government has pushed for this plan because it was a plan that was presented thirty years ago and they now have a chance to build it. However, it will not serve the major population growth in the Cedar Rapids area.

Diana Horton, Plant Ecologist for the University of Iowa said she has lived in Iowa since 1983 and the Rock Island Preserve was one of the first preserves she visited when she came to the state. She said she continues to visit it several

times a year, bringing classes from biogeography and from systematics. One of the things that first interested her about this site is that there are some very nice populations of an extremely rare moss in the old sandpit area. She said she has also visited the proposed addition with the exception of the pond and the island. On the basis of her experience with the existing preserve and the proposed addition she strongly urges the board to add the addition to the preserve system. She said there are sound ecological reasons for doing so, first because the byssus skipper sand prairie is very different from the sand prairie in the existing preserve. There are different dominant species and therefore expands the diversity of the sand prairie community. The floodplain is a particularly nice addition, even without having a complete species list, because it is completely different habitat that is not represented in the existing preserve and is a natural complement to what is in the preserve. She said being a floodplain habitat there will not be a great deal of diversity of species in the low-lying areas that are constantly flooding but there are nice river birches and she has found at least one population of irises. She said she does not believe that there are many preserves in the current system that includes floodplain property. In addition taking the preserve down to the river allows for a natural buffer zone. She said adding the addition property is crucial in terms of buffer in general. The bigger it is the more chance there will be of populations surviving into the long term.

Sharon Elderkin from the Linn County Conservation Board said the preserves act is remedial and should be read in context with the statement of how the State of Iowa has lost 99% of our prairies, 90% of our wetlands, and 80% of our woodlands. The Preserves Board needs to preserve these areas for all Iowans. She said the Preserves Board depends on Conservation Boards to propose lands to be included in the system and to manage the properties once they have been dedicated as a preserve. In the State of Iowa, there have been no federally funded four-lane highways anywhere near a state preserve. The precedence if this road was to be built would have grave consequences to the preserve act.

Neil Bernstein said the Preserves Board is on the record as being against the highway.

Don Thomas, Streets and Public Improvements Commissioner for the City of Cedar Rapids said the Rock Island Preserve and the extension of Highway 100 hold equal importance to the citizens of their community. They urge everyone to work together so that the preserve and the other lands to the north can coexist as we develop future needs to serve their community. In order to accomplish this, a corridor for Highway 100 is needed somewhere between the existing Rock Island Preserve and the housing development which lies to the north. The majority of the Linn County Regional Planning Commission, the Linn County Board of Supervisors, the Cedar Rapids City Council, the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce, and a group of labor unions and builders all support this much needed highway extension. The planning for this highway has been underway for the past 25 to 30 years. The old railroad right of way which adjoins the

preserve in its northwest corner was acquired by the county and the city many years ago in anticipation of their future needs for a highway. The highway is needed to complete a circumferential route around the city of Cedar Rapids. He said the Linn County Regional Planning Commission voted to provide \$3,000,000 to start the initial planning for this important link. The Department of Transportation has been working on numerous alternatives to satisfy concerns for the apple orchard and the subdivision near Highway 30. They have changed the alignment to save a historic barn and have also provided access to a landlocked area near Covington. DOT is presently working with the environmental concerns related to the Rock Island Preserve and the homeowners north of the corridor, at least three alternatives are being looked at. He said he believed that all of the interested groups can work together and provide a platform where the environment and the highway can coexist. He said the City of Cedar Rapids respectfully request that the Preserves Board consider the highway corridor in a location that best coexists with the historical, ecological, and environmental concerns.

Pam Mackey Taylor from the Sierra Club said they are in favor of protecting the proposed addition by adding it to the preserve system. One of the big things the Sierra Club is interested in is expanding the preserve to include entire ecosystems so that a large set of plants and animals can live and sustain their existence.

HARTMAN RESERVE

Neil Bernstein said the Black Hawk County Conservation Board attended their last meeting asking that a portion of Hartman Reserve be dedicated as a state preserve. At that time the Preserves Board was given a species list and a management plan and they are in the process of compiling comments on the management plan. Some of the members toured the area and he would like to open the meeting up to comments about the reserve.

Neil Bernstein asked how much of the property was leased.

Vern Fish said of the 288 acres, 180 of them are leased; however the leased property is not included in the proposal for state preserve status.

Laura Jackson said Hartman Reserve is a central part of the Waterloo and Cedar Falls community that is being thoughtfully managed. She said she is curious to know what other upland oak-hickory forest areas there are in the preserves systems and how this area compares in terms of quality.

Neil Bernstein said since they are planning aggressive management on the forested area he asked if they planned to set up any study plots so that they can monitor its effectiveness.

Vern Fish said while he would have liked set up something to monitor the effectiveness of their management techniques they did not have the resources to so. He said there is some baseline data but there is not a complete inventory.

Neil Bernstein said if they planned to use the aggressive techniques of cutting and burning it would be nice to know they are moving in the right direction.

Vern Fish said they were only using the management techniques on less than six acres.

Neil Bernstein said the Board has a fairly good biological inventory of the area and a management plan which is everything needed to act on the proposal for dedication.

Jeff Vonk asked if there was any formal process to notify the public that the Board will be making a decision on whether or not to dedicate a property into the preserve system.

John Pearson said there has been no formal process in the past.

Jeff Vonk suggested having the Department's Legal Bureau review the issue and make a recommendation as to whether or not there needs to be one.

Laura Jackson suggested that the Board may want to consider identifying a friends group at the time of the dedication of a new preserve.

Robin Fortney asked Director Vonk to notify the Board of the legal opinion before the next meeting.

John Pearson said for the January meeting he could bring an analysis of how many preserves of different natural communities there are in the system. He said the upland forest type such as that in the Hartman Reserve is one of the more commonly represented types of forest in the preserve system; however the bottomland forest in general is not very well represented.

PRESERVE FRIENDS GROUP

Neil Bernstein said one of the things that came out of the strategic planning that was done several years ago was the concept of forming a friends group for each of the preserves. He said he had spoken with Diane Ford-Shivvers, Laura Jackson, John Pearson, and Daryl Howell via conference call to discuss the idea. He said included in the boards packet was the notes from that meeting and a document sent by Diane Ford-Shivvers.

Laura Jackson said at a joint meeting of the Nature Conservancy, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Iowa Prairie Network she realized that there was a

huge group of people who have ties to state preserves. She began talking them about forming friends group and had several interested parties. She said there are several different models for friends groups, one of them being from the Fish and Wildlife Service, which has been well thought out. Given the fact that the preserves system is very diverse with a number of different ownership relationships with different levels of management and that it is state wide she said she expects to encounter many challenges. It will need to be a very decentralized system because there will be different groups all with very different agendas.

Jeff Vonk said he believes this is a great idea. The Preserves Board meets quarterly and bemoans the fact that there are not enough resources to do the job they believe needs to be done. He said he attended a meeting earlier in the week that he believes to be the first of its kind. At this meeting all of the lake protective associations and friends of the lakes came together and decided they can do a better job getting political support for lake restoration and other like activities if they form a coalition. He said he believed that with time and a strong volunteer network it will lead to other kinds of benefits.

Laura Jackson said during the conference call they talked about Greg Beisker who has attended a number of the meetings for the State Preserves Advisory Board. She said he is from Ames, and has demonstrated an interest in and a commitment to the preserves systems. Therefore she believes he would be a good person to ask to serve as a general state-wide organizer for this program. She suggested that the board invite him to help them establish the friends group.

John Pearson said he would be able to put together a preliminary list of preserves that already have a group associated with it and asked that anyone with additional information contact him.

Neil Bernstein said Julie Sparks had asked the board to submit articles about 10 preserves at a time, which she would use in the Iowa Conservationist as space permits. He asked for volunteers to do a write up of preserves in their area. The article could include directions to the preserve, a photograph, and some statements about what can be seen and when the best times to visit are.

Jeff Vonk said another option would be the dedication of one issue of the Conservationist to the preserves system.

Laura Jackson said she would like to see a comparison of Iowa's preserve system to those of other states so that the public can see that there is a fairly slender support system for Iowa preserves as opposed to Wisconsin or Minnesota. She said it would not be a good idea to represent the preserves system as being in good shape.

Jeff Vonk said while he is not opposed to doing that, it is important to understand that there is a bias involved whenever you start comparing to other states. The bigger message that he hopes to be able to talk about more is raising consciousness because it is about choices. He said our political leaders have to make choices within the budget and at this time their choices are going to other areas.

Neil Bernstein said with the friends group the board can begin to develop a network to get the message to the political leaders who make those decisions.

John Pearson said one thing the department is doing that ties neatly with this effort is developing greatly enhanced website for the state preserves system. He said there is enough on the website now that he would be sending the site address to the board members and asked them to take a look at it and make suggestions for improvement.

Neil Bernstein said he would contact Mr. Beisker and invite him to head up the friends group. He said that he liked the idea of dedicating an entire issue of the Iowa Conservationist to the preserves system, but in the meantime he would like to have the board members choose a preserve that they want to do a write up for. At the bottom of all of the articles it would be a good idea to tell people that the preserves guide is available and also include contact information for the friends group. He said he would like to volunteer to write about Hanging Bog, Caylor Prairie, and Freda Hafner Kettlehole state preserves.

Laura Jackson said she would do Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and Clay Prairie.

Robin Fortney said she would do Gitchie Manitou State Preserve and would like to do a story on Strasser Woods State Preserve including the issues and concerns surrounding it.

Laura Jackson said she believe that the concerns for the preserves should be included in the write up because even though they are in the preserve system does not mean they are protected from exotic species, dumping, or other threats to the preserve.

Robin Fortney said she would also do Brushy Creek and White Pine Hollow.

Bob McKay said he would be willing to help with the geological aspects of the articles.

Daryl Howell said it might be possible to have the steering committee meeting in conjunction with the January meeting of the Preserves Board.

Laura Jackson said it would be nice to have a list of the people and organizations that are currently associated with preserves and some basic information on the 501(c)(3) for that meeting.

Neil Bernstein said at a previous meeting, the board had been given a list of potential geological and archaeological areas to look at as potential preserves.

Bob McKay said when developing the long range plan for the preserves board he was asked to identify some of the gaps in the geology part of the preserves system. He said he made a matrix of what was already represented in the system and determined what should be there but wasn't and offered a couple of specific sites in his recommendation to the board. However the landowners have not been contacted and would need to be in order for this to go any further.

Daryl Howell said he would mail the long range plan to all of the members of the board and it would be put on the agenda for the January meeting.

Laura Jackson asked if The Nature Conservancy might have any objections to the Board looking for a friends group for the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie.

Neil Bernstein said he thought they should be notified but did not foresee any problems.

Kathy Gourley asked if they wanted to let people know prior to the January meeting about the friends group.

Laura Jackson said that we are not ready for a stampede of people who are interested in becoming a member of the friends group.

Robin Fortney said it might be helpful to put together a list of people who can represent the areas of the state.

Neil Bernstein said it might be a good idea to allow Greg Beisker to decide the direction to go next if he decides to take on the job as coordinator.

GRAND REUNION

Daryl Howell said he had distributed a letter from Jerome Thompson to the board members.

Kathy Gourley said that Jerome, who for a number of years served as the Bureau Chief for Museums and Educational Services at the State Historical Society has since June taken on management of the historical sites that are owned by the State Historical Society one of which is Montauk. In June the State Historical Society is planning the centennial of the Grand Reunion which was a gathering of Civil War veterans. There will be a statue rededication, reenactment of some

battles, etc. The biggest impact to the site will be brush clearing that will need to be done on the north edge of the property to allow for a walkway from the parking area at the Heritage Park into the preserve area. She said the undergrowth is approximately three foot in height and is a mix of brambles and poison ivy. She said that Jerome Thompson simply wanted to make the board aware of their intentions.

Neil Bernstein said because this is a historical preserve he did not believe there were any biological concerns.

UPDATES

Neil Bernstein said there are three other areas that the Board is in various stages of investigating for dedication as a preserve. They are the Banister/McGregor property, the Baylor Prairie and the Glenwood Hospital sites. He said he thought it would be a good idea, each meeting to review what is going on so that the properties are not forgotten. He said the Bannister/McGregor property will be discussed in detail at the January meeting, but as a brief update, he and Daryl visited the property on Friday, October 18, and seined the wetlands located adjacent to the Raccoon River. Most of them were either dry or contained no species, however one contained a lot of fat head minnows, orange spotted sunfish and green sunfish, none which are of much interest for preserve status. He said he had also contacted the Greene County engineer to see what the plans for the roadway are. The engineer sent him the proposed alignment for the roadway which he plans to bring to the January meeting for review and discussion. The engineer did mention that the county is looking into getting the injunction reversed.

John Pearson said Jimmy Thompson of Ames, an amateur botanist performed a preliminary survey of the Bannister/McGregor property. He found the rare but unlisted coral root orchid but nothing threatened or endangered. He said notice will go out in January to recruit additional studies for this property.

Neil Bernstein said it would be nice to start the plant surveys at snow melt instead of July so that the board will not have to wait until the following spring to get the results.

John Pearson said that last year the board held its project selection meeting early in April so that if any of the botanists wanted to get out in the field right away they would have that option. The problem with that is between April and July 1 the Department does not actually know if the Legislature will appropriate funds for the Preserves Board portion of their budget.

Neil Bernstein said he and Daryl have also discussed calling the Boone Wildlife Station to find out who was doing the frog surveys in that area, in an effort to get

volunteers that are already in the area to do the frog and amphibian surveys this coming spring.

Kathy Gourley said that because the road should not influence the board in any way when deciding whether or not to dedicate this property to the preserve system she did not think it would be appropriate to have the county engineer come to the January meeting to discuss their plans.

Robin Fortney said she did not think it hurts the board to be aware of what is going on.

John Pearson said he believes that it is important that the Board receive the information first hand to avoid any miscommunication.

Neil Bernstein said there are studies being conducted at Baylor prairie and Glenwood State School and he asked John Pearson to give an update on those.

John Pearson said that Suzanne Hickey with the Nature Conservancy is in the final stages of developing the management plan for Baylor Prairie and he expects that it will be presented to the Board at a future meeting. He the \$3,000 that the Board had set aside for the compilation of available archaeological information at the Glenwood State Hospital had been transferred to the office of the State Archaeologist, who created an internship and hired a person to do the work. The report should be completed and delivered to the board sometime next spring.

HAYDEN PRAIRIE RESEARCH REQUEST

John Pearson said the Department had received a research request from Skye Wills who would like to do some core sampling in Hayden Prairie. The soil coring will be done with a truck mounted corer and will consist of approximately 245 core samples.

Neil Bernstein asked why they needed to use a truck mounted probe to go down a meter and a half.

John Pearson said the core is three inches in diameter.

Laura Jackson asked if there was any way to require the person to use balloon tires on the truck.

Darryl Howell said the board could ask that Mr. Wills to coordinate his efforts with the area manager to make sure it is dry before going on the property.

Kathy Gourley said she is not convinced that what Skye Wills wanted to do could not be accomplished on a nonpreserve area.

Laura Jackson said this is exactly what Ada Hayden described as a good reason to have prairie preserves, that being the comparison of agricultural effects on soils over time.

Scott Moats said if they are going to do a grid they will have to drive over the same area a few times and if you drive over the same area, even if you do not rip up the sod, brome and bluegrass can invade those areas unless you burn. He said he doubts that they will burn 160 acres of Hayden all in one shot. His other concerns are it seems like a lot of holes and the proposal does not appear to be finalized at this time.

John Pearson said he believes they want to do the core sampling on Hayden Prairie first and if necessary will submit proposals for additional areas. He said the board can suggest that Mr. Wills work closely with the area manager, who can tell him where and when he can and cannot drive on the prairie. He said as long as they stay on dry areas and do not leave big ruts he does not have any problem with the request.

Paul Christiansen said there is precedence for this type of activity at Hayden Prairie as several years ago Michael Thompson and himself took several cores with the pickup mounted equipment. The information collected through this was invaluable to their study.

Robin Fortney said she feels this type of study is very important.

Laura Jackson said she would like to see the result for this study publicized in something like the Iowa Conservationist because she believes they are going to find huge differences in organic matter and crumb structure, which will heighten the relevance of the preserves system.

Bob McKay asked if perhaps the number of holes could be reduced without compromising the study.

John Pearson said the number of holes being proposed is the main reason this is being brought before the board for a decision. Usually core samples are approved by the Department as a matter of course.

Robert Scarth, a citizen from Cedar Rapids said he drives by Hayden Prairie quite frequently and the last time he was by there were already ruts in the preserve near the main sign. He said in addition there is a great deal of encroachment of brush. He suggested doing a burn.

John Pearson said brush encroachment at Hayden Prairie has historically been a problem. There was a major effort ten years ago to knock it down, which was pretty successful and the previous Saturday they held a prairie rescue effort, the

target again being to knock down the brush but it is an on going problem. He said following the brush control effort ten years ago they tried an accelerated burn program where they were burning half the prairie at one time until they received advice from Kirk Larson, an entomologist from Luther College who said that the beetles were being adversely affected by the frequency of the burning. When they backed off on the frequency the brush started to show up again so they are still working to find the right balance.

Motion was made by Robin Fortney to approve the proposal with conditions. Seconded by Laura Jackson.

Neil Bernstein said the conditions for approval are as follows:

- To work with the area manager to ensure the conditions are relatively dry and that the vehicle would not tear up large patches of sod and soil.
- To ask if it would be possible to do the same study with fewer samples.
- To work with the Preserves Board to do an article of the results for general public education.

Motion carried unanimously.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Robin Fortney said she had noticed that there are no scenic preserves in the preserve system and because she is a paddler she has noticed several locations that could be considered. She said one of the areas she is very interested in is the greenbelt along the Iowa River. She said this area already has a necklace of preserves.

Neil Bernstein said the first thing that would need to be done is to get a map of all of the lands involved and then begin to line up the entities that the board will need to contact to move it toward dedication as a scenic preserve.

Laura Jackson said scenery is the first reason that national parks are created and is the most popular reasons for going somewhere. She said she sees the possibility of creating a scenic preserve as an important step.

Robin Fortney said this would also be a good way to call the public's attention to the rivers.

Kathy Gourley said there is a Central Iowa River cooperative that goes through Hardin, Wright and Franklin Counties that has been fairly active in looking at their cultural resources and may be a good resource to use.

Neil Bernstein suggested scheduling another meeting in the area to bring the entities together.

Kathy Gourley said the Fort Atkinson Church, located at the base of the hill and not within the boundaries of the preserve, is in desperate need of a roof in order to maintain the structure.

John Pearson asked if the church would be a logical addition to the preserve.

Kathy Gourley said she did not have enough information to make that decision, the church post dates the military fort and is believed to have built with rocks that were quarried from the fort itself. She said as a follow up to the April meeting Al and Louann Becker from the City of Fort Atkinson who were very helpful in the Cultural Resources Field School received the Governor's Volunteer Award for their work.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Daryl Howell said that he had received a call from Rod Scott, who has a round barn, near Iowa Falls in Hardin County that they are interested in having the Board consider as a historic preserve.

The board members decided on the following dates for the 2003 State Preserves Advisory Board meetings:

- January 3, 2003 at the Wallace State Office Building 4th floor conference rooms in Des Moines, Iowa.
- April 3 and 4 with a tour of Baylor Prairie and Glenwood State Hospital
- July 11 and 12 in Hardin County
- October 3 and 4 in Southeast Iowa
- With an additional tour of the Karl DeLong Savanna on September 6

BOARD TOUR

On Thursday October the Board toured Hartman Reserve an 10:00 AM and the Rock Island Preserve with the adjacent property owned by the Linn County Conservation Board at 2:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

<i>Motion was made by Kathy Gourley to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Scott Moats. Motion carried unanimously</i>
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With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Bernstein adjourned the meeting at 12:55 PM on Friday, October 25, 2002.

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